

Application No.:10/804,837

Reply to Office Action of September 20, 2005

b.) Amendments to Drawings:

The following sheets of drawings includes changes to Fig. 3. This sheet, which includes Figs. 3-4, replaces the original sheeting including Figs. 3-4. In Fig. 3, previously omitted reference number 20 has been added.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet
Annotated Sheet Showing Changes

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c.) Remarks

Claims 1-30 were pending in this application. Claims 1, 3, 4, 9, 11, 12, 14, 15, 20, 22, 23, 29 and 30 have been amended as indicated hereinabove. Claims 2, 5-8, 10, 13, 16-19, 21 and 24-28 are canceled. New claim 31 has been added.

All claims have been rejected, and the drawings have been objected to.

Drawings

Fig. 3 has been corrected by adding the reference number 20, mentioned in paragraph [24] of the specification.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §112

The Examiner's objections to Claims 11, 22 and 30 are believed to have been overcome by the above amendments.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC §103

Claims 1-4, 8-15, 19-23 and 27-30 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over applicant-admitted prior art (AAPA) in view of Lys et al. (Lys), U.S. Patent Publication 2001/0028227.

Claims 5-7, 16-18 and 24-26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA in view of Lys and further in view of Sivacumarran, U.S. Patent No. 6,727,652.

The AAPA, as discussed in the Background of the Invention, teaches indicator lights located outside a patient's room in a healthcare facility with multiple dome lights, each having separate colors for separate conditions.

While Lys is primarily directed to track lighting with a RS-485 interface, Lys, Abstract, Lys also appears to suggest many ways to use a light module comprising LEDs. More specifically, Lys teaches a light module that can be plugged into a fixture for a conventional lamp or light bulb. Lys, Fig. 20 and para. [0193]. Lys does not teach or

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suggest a light module that can be plugged into a fixture in either of two polarities or orientations such that the displayed color is dependent on the orientation.

Sivacumarran similarly teaches an LED lamp assembly that can be used in place of a conventional bulb. Sivacumarran, Abstract. Sivacumarran does not however, as the Examiner suggests, appear to discuss the use of different colored LEDs. A search for the word "color" on the U.S. PTO's web site for this patent yields no matches.

Applicant's invention as recited in claim 1 as amended herein includes a nurse call indicator housing having plural snap-in sockets, each socket for holding and providing electrical contact to an individually replaceable snap-in 24-volt indicator incandescent bulb (Specification, para. [26]); and at least one snap-in indicator lamp which fits into one of said sockets and which accepts 24 volts. The lamp has a first set of LEDs having a first color and a first polarity; and a second set of LEDs having a second color and a second polarity. The second polarity is opposite the first polarity such that when power is applied to the nurse call indicator lamp, only one of the sets of LEDs is turned on according to the polarity of the applied power. The claimed invention can be installed in either of two orientations / polarities, the displayed color being dependent on the orientation / polarity.

For example, with the single-color indicator lamp (not claimed) of Fig. 3, the correct polarity is delivered to the LEDs regardless of orientation in which the indicator lamp is installed. Specification, para. [25]. Thus, the indicator can be installed in either of two orientations. The two-color indicator lamp of Fig. 6 is of similar physical structure, but without the rectifier of the Fig. 3 embodiment, so that only one set of LEDs turn on (and only one color is displayed) when power is applied, depending on the orientation in which the device has been installed. That is, the installed orientation determines the applied polarity. New claim 31 has been added to specifically recite this aspect. No new matter has been added.

The invention as recited in amended claim 1 presents a significant and much-needed improvement in the nurse-call field. Until Applicant's invention, typically either incandescent bulbs have been required, or as the Specification indicates at paragraph

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[03], LED lamps have been employed whose replacement / installation require the arduous removal and replacement of a printed circuit board fastened to the housing. The claimed invention simplifies the task by allowing a user to replace an existing nurse call incandescent bulb/lamp with the inventive lamp without any tools. Furthermore, less inventory is required as one lamp according to the claimed invention may be used for either of two colors, depending upon the orientation in which it is installed (and thus the polarity of the voltage across it when it is turned on).

Neither the AAPA, Lys nor Sivacumarran, taken separately or in combination, teach or suggest these features of a nurse call indicator lamp. Claim 1 as amended should therefore be allowable, and Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 in favor of allowance. Allowance of dependent claims 3, 4, 9 and 11 should follow.

Further, with respect to claim 9, none of the references teach or suggest an indicator lamp having electrically conductive rails for electrically connecting to the incandescent bulb socket. Therefore claim 9 should be allowable regardless of the final disposition of base claim 1.

For similar reasons, claims 14, 15, 20, 22, 23, 29 and 30 as amended should also be allowable.

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance. No new matter has been introduced by this Amendment. A Notice of Allowance is respectfully solicited. Should any questions arise, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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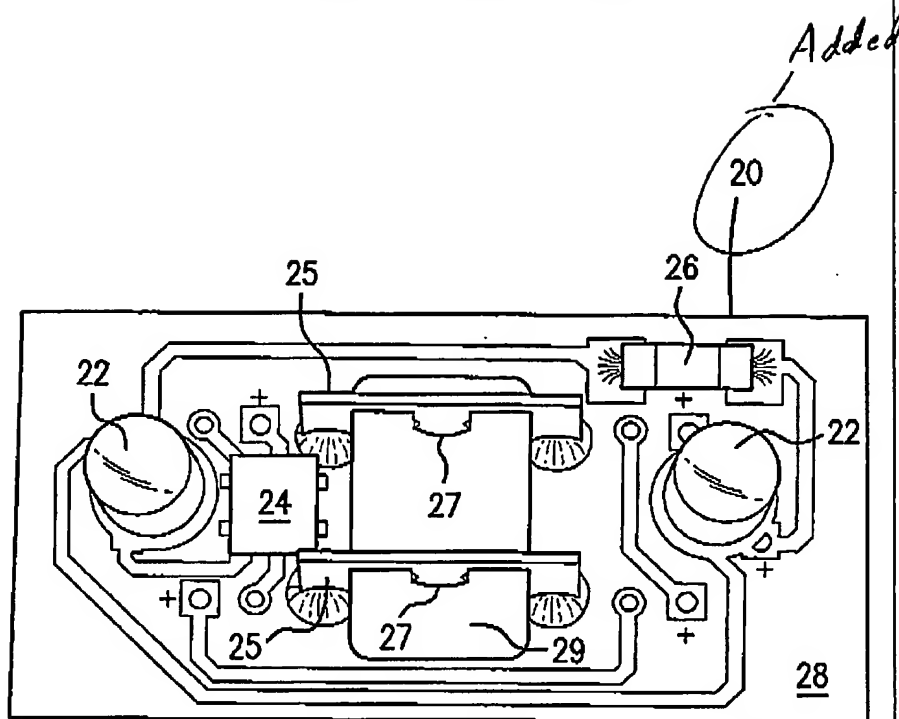


FIG. 3

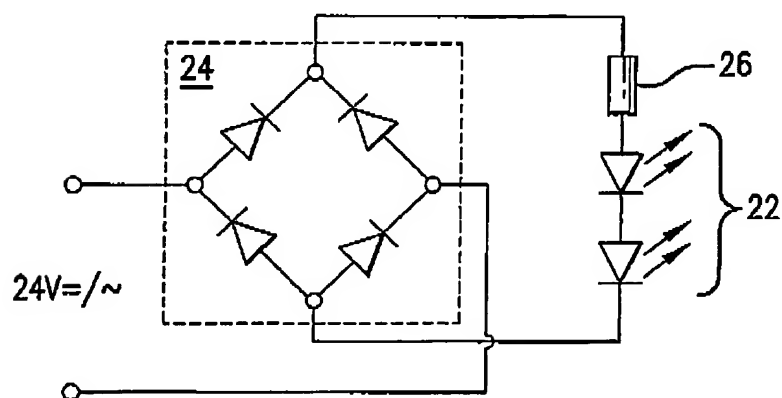


FIG. 4